

SIMPLE, STRAIGHTFORWARD CONSTRUCTION

- 1. Start by digging a 4-8” depression with gradually sloping sides as large in circumference as you like. A 4-8” depth will allow water to be captured, but will dry between rain events. If you prefer to hold water in your garden in drier times, dig a portion a little deeper, say 18” in depth. Test your soil’s ability to hold water by filling the hole with water. If it drains out, you may want to install a plastic liner where you want ponding and install the plants around the liner.
- 2. Direct your downspout or sump pump outlet to your rain garden, either by digging a shallow swale—a linear depression designed to channel water—or by routing it through a buried 4” PVC pipe.
- 3. Plant native flowers and grass throughout the garden.
- 4. Add untreated, shredded hardwood mulch to a depth of 3” on all of the bare soil around the plants to prevent erosion while your flowers and grasses are establishing their roots.
- 5. Water your plants every other day for the first few weeks, until they are growing and well established. Once your rain garden plants are established, they’ll thrive well without additional watering.

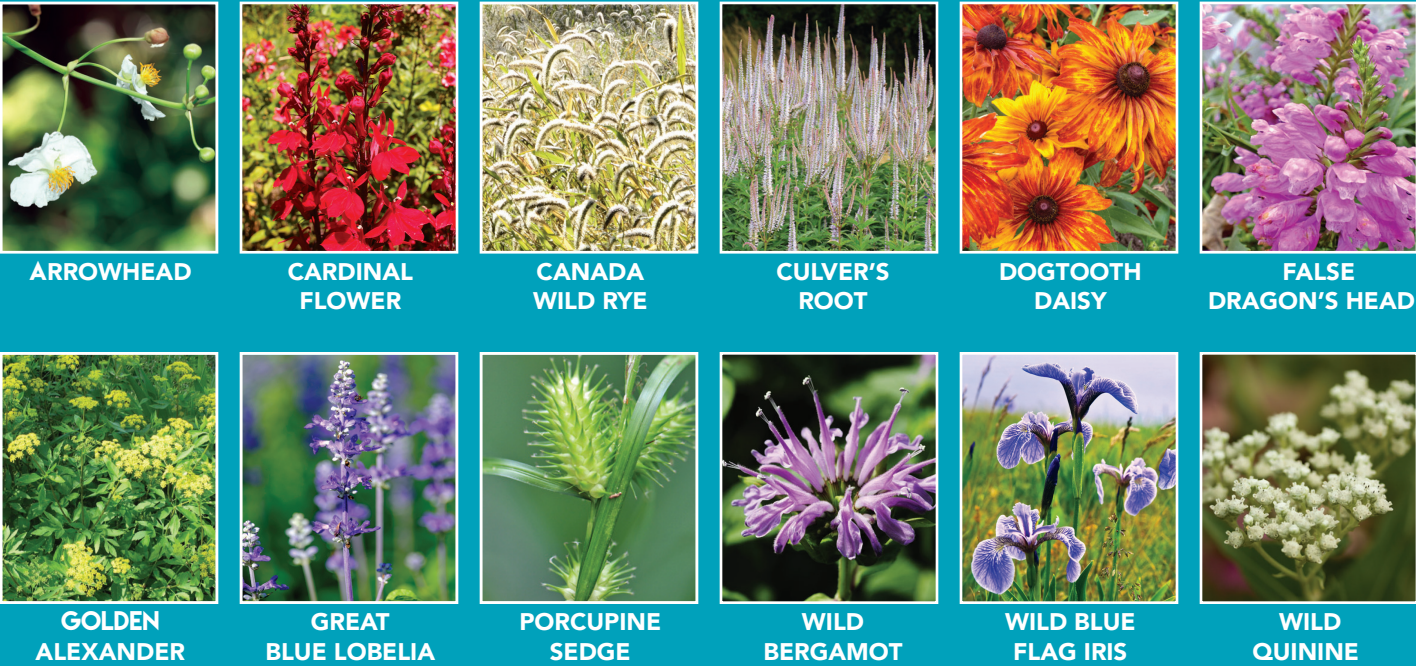


ADDITIONAL USEFUL TIPS

- Place natural rocks, bird houses, a bench or garden ornaments in and around your rain garden—be creative! You’ll learn and have fun in designing your own backyard landscape.
- Add plenty of native sedges and grasses to physically support taller species. This will provide a visually textured background that ties the garden together.
- Avoid using weed killer and lawn fertilizers. Fertilizers will stimulate weed competition without benefitting your native plants.
- Hand weed bi-weekly until native plants are established.
- Don’t worry about mosquitoes. Most rain gardens will not hold water long enough for mosquitoes to reproduce. Even so, dragonflies, swallows and other wildlife will keep them in check.
- Come spring, mow and remove dead vegetation.

NOW THAT AN AREA IS SELECTED FOR YOUR RAIN GARDEN, WHERE DO YOU FIND THE PLANTS?

The City of St. Charles Department of Public Works will provide residents with a seed mix to start their own rain garden. The seed mix is ideal for areas that tend to stay damp throughout the growing season. Once established, these plants are an excellent way for residents to improve stormwater quality by maintaining a rain garden with native vegetation. Please visit the Department of Public Works webpage <https://www.stcharlescitemo.gov/179/Public-Works> or call 636-949-3363 for a list of locations where you can pick up the seed.



Build Your Own rain garden





WHAT IS A RAIN GARDEN?

A rain garden is a shallow depression in your yard that is planted with native wetland or wet prairie wildflowers and grasses. It is designed to naturally collect water that runs off your roof or is discharged from your sump pump.

WHAT TO PLANT:

Native plants are a natural for this landscape application because they tolerate short periods of standing water and are drought tolerant. The deep roots of these plants make it easy for water to move down into the soil.

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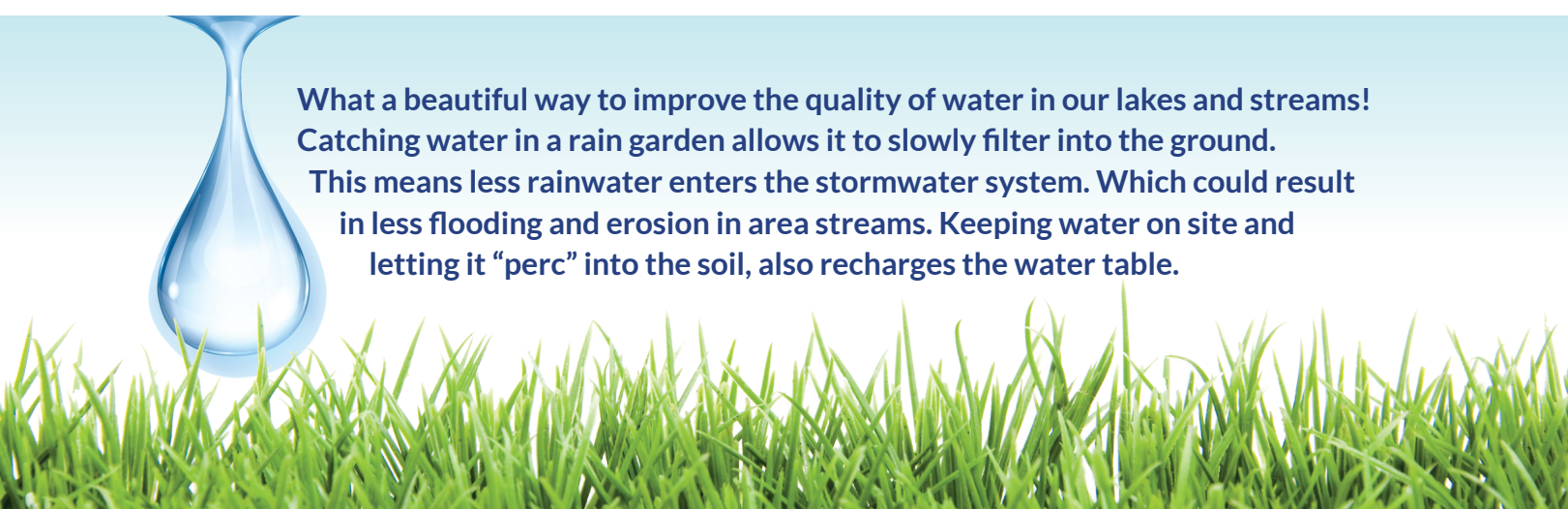
- 🦋 Making use of stormwater runoff, conserves water supplies and helps protect water quality in downstream creeks, rivers and lakes
 - 🦋 Don't require fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides.
 - 🦋 Support a diversity of wildlife by improving area habitats
 - 🦋 Reduces long-term maintenance after plantings are established
 - 🦋 Lasting longer because they are winter hardy, drought tolerant, and are less prone to destructive insects and diseases
 - 🦋 Rain Gardens provide food and shelter for birds, butterflies and beneficial insects, such as mosquito-devouring dragonflies!

When choosing which natives are best for your rain garden, consider height, wildlife attraction, flowering and sun/shade tolerance.

Consult the planting guides for sun and partial shade plant recommendations that attract birds and butterflies.



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A large, stylized blue water droplet is shown falling from the top left corner of the image. The droplet is elongated and has a bright highlight on its surface. Below the droplet, a dense field of vibrant green grass fills the bottom half of the image. The background is a solid light blue color.

What a beautiful way to improve the quality of water in our lakes and streams! Catching water in a rain garden allows it to slowly filter into the ground. This means less rainwater enters the stormwater system. Which could result in less flooding and erosion in area streams. Keeping water on site and letting it “perc” into the soil, also recharges the water table.

WHERE SHOULD I PLANT A RAIN GARDEN?

AN EXAMPLE OF A RAIN GARDEN FOR WELL-DRAINED TO SANDY SOILS

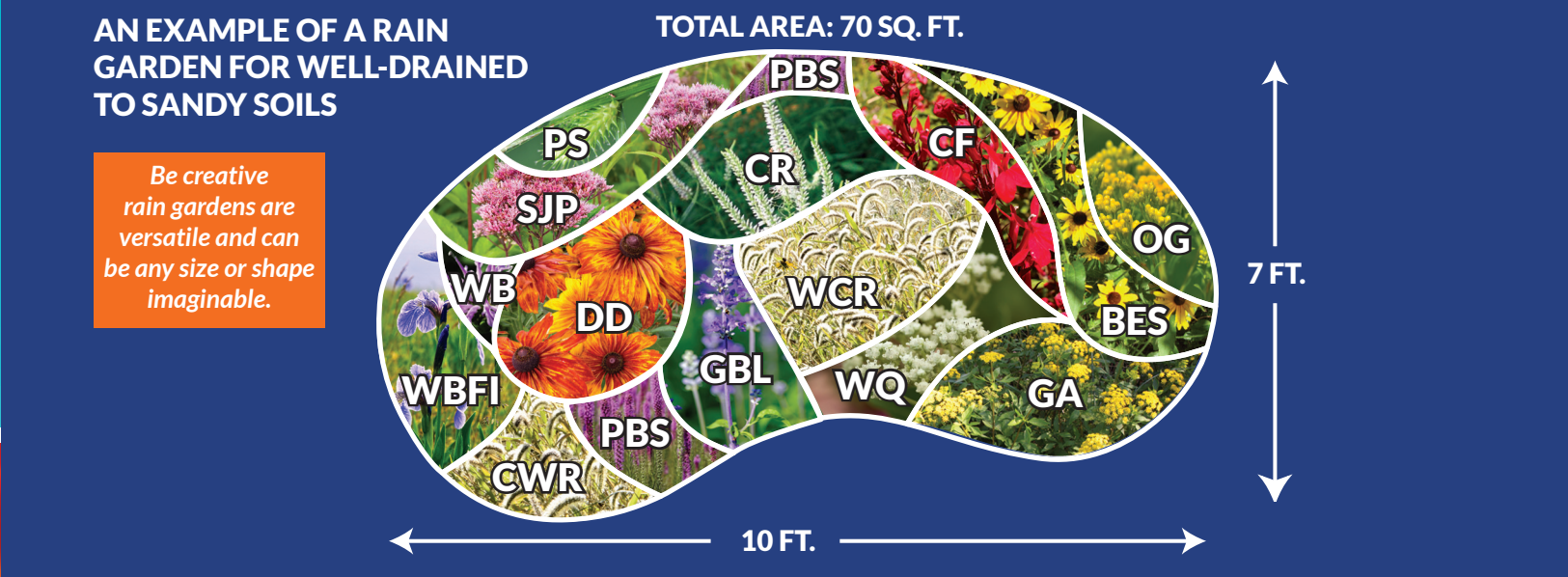
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TOTAL AREA: 70 SQ. FT.

10 FT.

7 FT.

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BLOOMS				BLOOMS			
		HEIGHT	BLOOMS			HEIGHT	BLOOMS
BES	Black Eyed Susan	1-3'	Jun-Sep	GBL	Great Blue Lobelia	1-4'	Aug-Sep
PS	Porcupine Sedge	2-3'	Jul-Sep	WB	Wild Bergamot	2-4'	Jul-Aug
SJP	Spotted Joe-Pye	2-5'	Jul-Sep	MM	Wild Quinine	2-4'	May-Aug
DD	Dogtooth Daisy	2-4'	Aug-Oct	GB	Wild Blue Flag Iris	2-3'	May-Jun
PBS	Prairie Blazing Star	2-4'	Jul-Sep	OG	Ohio Goldenrod	3-4'	Aug-Sepv
CWR	Canada Wild Rye	2-5'	Mar-Jun	CR	Culver's Root	3-5'	Jul-Aug
CF	Cardinal Flower	2-4'	Jul-Sep	GA	Golden Alexander	1-2'	May-Jun

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

It is important to locate your rain garden where it will collect the most amount of rainfall runoff possible. Downhill from paved surfaces where water would naturally flow will maximize the garden's ability to collect runoff. An existing low spot in your yard, is the most logical location. However, do not place your garden in an area where water currently pools. Standing water shows you where the soil is slow to absorb water.

The rain garden's function is to aid in water infiltration. If needed, dig a shallow swale to direct overflow water toward the street, road or other downhill areas. And make sure the garden is at least 10 feet from buildings to keep water from seeping into and damaging the foundation. Full sun is best, but make sure the site gets at least a half-day of sunlight.



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